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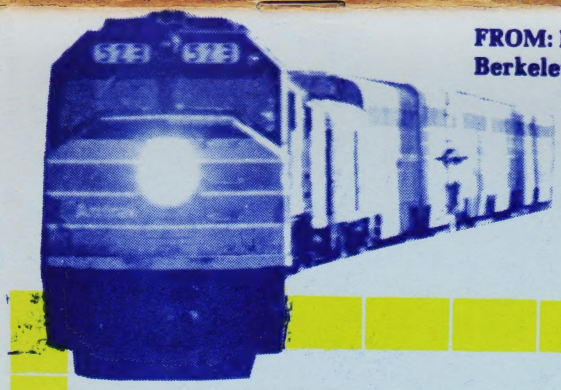
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS



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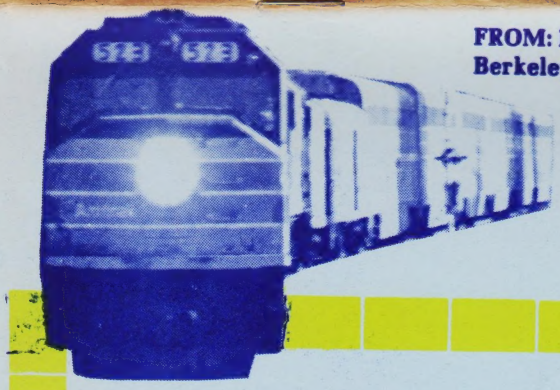

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FIRST CLASS

Ted and Sylvia Blishak, owners of Accent on Travel, are frequent RTN contributors.
Accent on Travel holds Amtrak's "Golden Spike Award" for high ticket sales.

DON'T DIAL AMTRAK! Dial Ted and Sylvia Blishak at (415) 326-7331 for your reservations and AVOID BUSY SIGNALS AND "HOLDS"! Low fares for families, handicapped travelers, senior citizens. We also sell Britrail and Eurail passes, cruises, and air tickets.
Call "The Railfans" at Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis Street, Menlo Park, California 94025. (415) 326-7331.

LETTERS

In issue no. 248 Mr. Oscar F. Nelson, Jr. roasts the smokers. As far back as I can remember there were smoking and non-smoking coaches. In the open section Pullmans the men took to those black leather settees in the wash room. With the advent of bedrooms and air conditioning the system was good enough not to send smoke from one bedroom to another. Why worry about diners? At the rate we are progressing we will soon wind up with vending machines. Of course, as Mr. Nelson says, what rules exist should be enforced.

But behind all the smoke there may be a different and more serious problem. If one smoker can set a modern car afire to the point where it destroys itself, then there is something wrong with the car and the materials of which it is made. Did you ever hear of a standard Pullman burning itself out, from within?

Edward F. Carter
Annapolis, Maryland

As a person who rides some 7- to 10,000 miles a year on Amtrak, I believe that professional travelers such as myself should the kind of information contained in the "Panic Box" to see what problems Amtrak regularly faces, and how they handle them. By and large, I am impressed that Amtrak does as well as it does. First of all, many of the problems are beyond Amtrak's control, like derailments of freights that necessitate detours and collisions with vehicles on the tracks.

Another viewpoint is that we are in bigger trouble if Amtrak routinely covers up problems like those described in the "Panic Box." An open process is much more likely to result in corrective actions being taken. With Amtrak receiving so much public subsidy, the public is entitled to know what they are getting--or not getting--for their money. If Amtrak changes their policy about letting RTN receive "Panic Box" info, the freedom of information law should be invoked.

R. Longabaugh
Delmar, New York

The letter from Mark Meyer of Montana in issue 249 was 'way off base about the EAGLE and service in Texas. The EAGLE has just about reached its potential because it cannot hold any more people. The single sleeper is always sold out weeks in advance, and could sell another if one were included in the consist. The northbound EAGLE is almost always standing room only north of Little Rock and sometimes Dallas. For every reservation showing in the Arrow system to board at Marshall, another two show up to get on the train. This information has been furnished to the local Congressman by the local Marshall tourist agency because they have been having to furnish information on Amtrak to the general public because Marshall is an unmanned stop on the EAGLE. Marshall boards an average of 20-25 passengers per trip.

If somebody wants to get on a bandwagon for where Amtrak needs to provide more service, we have it. Texas and Oklahoma could use service to Colorado. This could be done by running a train from Texas to Newton KS meeting another train that would have started in St. Louis and combining and then proceeding to La Junta CO and then to Denver. This service would also go thru Pueblo and Colorado Springs.

As far as the politicians' running things, it was the politicians in the East in cahoots with DOT in 1979 that killed the LONE STAR, FLORIDIAN, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, etc., but it also was the politicians in our state, with the exception of Rep. Jim Wright, that prevented the removal of both the then INTER-AMERICAN and the SUNSET LIMITED.

Dave Garland, Director, TEX/ARP
Austin, Texas

ON THE COVER

The American Express luxury tour, with cars on the rear of the SUNSET LIMITED, prepares to leave Los Angeles on May 23. Coverage of this special excursion appeared in RTN 247. The car in the photo is ex-Western Pacific CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR dome observation "Silver Crescent", now owned by Gold Coast Railroad Museum in Florida. This car appeared also on the cover of RTN 241. Photo by Peter Bretz.

★ HOUSE APPROVES FUNDS FOR AMTRAK

The House Appropriations Committee on Aug 19 approved a fiscal 1983 appropriation of $788 million for Amtrak, the maximum amount it could appropriate under last year's 2-year authorization bill. In doing so, it followed the lead of its subcommittee. After the Labor Day recess, the full House should vote on the same bill. After that, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee is to report out its own bill, which is likely to contain a smaller amount for Amtrak.

OCTOBER 31 AMTRAK SCHEDULE CHANGES

Amtrak Metroliners will speed up with the Oct 31 schedule change, with six expresses at 2hrs, 49mins each while the rest will be 2:59. The eastbound EMPIRE BUILDER will run 35mins later to provide better times at Minneapolis/St. Paul. It will leave there at 7:25am instead of 6:50. The westbound train will run 20 mins later to keep both from arriving at Spokane simultaneously; it will leave Chicago at 2:50pm. A stop on the PALMETTO may be introduced between Wilson and Fayetteville NC to serve Selma and Smithfield.

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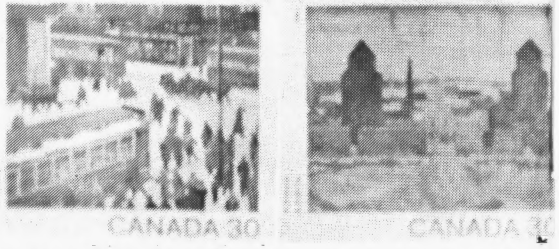
RAIL CANADA

CANADIAN POST OFFICE has just issued a series of stamps showing one painting for each province. Shown here are the Quebec and Alberta designs. The left one shows streetcars in Quebec City, in a painting by Hebert. On the right is a Kerr painting of boxcars in Alberta. These



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PEPIN USING VIA PLUNDER TO PAY FOR NEW YORK SUBWAY BLUNDER!

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OBSERVATIONS ABOUT CANADA II by Thomas Higgins

It appears that ridership is down on the POLAR BEAR EXPRESS this summer. The recession has hit Canada and the northern part of the U.S. hard, and train rides seem to be a luxury.

I spotted the Royal Train of Princess Anne at Portage-la-Prairie on July 12. It consisted of two freshly painted CP GP9 engines, CP business cars "Strathcone" and "Killarney", a VIA/CP/Budd coach 103 (for the press), and finally the two pearl gray and royal blue cars of the Governor General (with the Imperial State Crown affixed). Oh! That we could all travel like this!

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The CANADIAN's menu has been reduced to four entrees, but all food is freshly cooked and reasonably priced. You can have a complete meal or ala carte, the prime ribs being the most expensive item. VIA menus are printed in card form. The lunch and dinner menu are the same every day.

Trains 7&8 still use the crew space in the baggage-dorm car for sale to revenue passengers. Of the 12 roomettes, eight are sold to the public.

VIA trains 109-110 and 102-104 are generally only one coach snack bar and a baggage car. I suppose in the fall we will be hearing that only 70 passengers ride these all-reserved trains so that they will have to go--of course, they only hold 70 people. VIA and the Ministry of Transport should give these trains a fair chance and add an extra coach or two--why are people standing on an all-reserved train?

VIA has refurbished its 3200-series coaches to include a snack bar in the rear, and folddown tables at each seat. You bring your food back to your seat, but drinks are served at your seat. One of the coaches did not yet have the folddown tables, so you were given a tray with your food. The food was much better than on Amtrak, but a little on the expensive side for quick-order snack food (altho most of what I had was better than Amtrak's full dining car meals).

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VIA RAIL IS working on the other North Shore line--the one between Montreal and Quebec. VIA wants to: (1) build a large new station in Laval, on the north side of Montreal, and close the St. Martin station; (2) start the trains out of Central Station; the CP Park Avenue station on the existing run has been sold to the city of Montreal for a "cultural centre"; (3) perhaps get back to Palais Station in Quebec, depending on funding; (4) cover the Montreal-Quebec run in two hours; (5) cut out local stops on the line--this may raise opposition; (6) provide better connections to Ottawa from Quebec. VIA must go before the CTC to get all this approved, especially the fifth point.

PROPOSED TGV LINE between Montreal and New York is being studied by French railway specialists in a $50,000 study for Montreal, but the next step would be up to the Province of Quebec. Pro-rail Michel Clair, the provincial Transport Minister, must be persuaded. La Presse transport writer Guy Pinard says that the downgrading of Mirabel Airport has not affected Montreal's plans to promote the TGV line.

VIA RAIL WATCHERS feel that within a couple of months one will be able to see the direction that VIA is taking under its new leadership. If orders for new equipment are placed, this would be a favorable sign that the company is pulling back from an expensive corridor-only development and putting money in badly-needed equipment to be used over the whole system. It seems to be generally felt that the government will not seek more massive VIA cutbacks this year.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

PITTSBURGH STREETCARS ORDERED

The contract was formally signed on July 14: PAT, Pittsburgh's streetcar and bus operator, will get 55 new LRVs (light rail vehicles) for $53.3 million. The Edmonton, Calgary and San Diego look--the Siemens-DuWag supertrolley--comes to Pennsylvania's Golden Triangle and South Hills. Two German-made vehicles are expected within 18 to 20 months, and the first two to run off a new American assembly line in the Blaw-Knox Equipment Factory in suburban Pittsburgh are expected within 24 months.

While San Diego may only now, a year after inauguration, be readjusting wheelchair lifts that work dependably, the Pittsburgh LRVs will solve it without moving parts. Three doors on an articulated car side will be for high-platform, wheelchair roll-on loading, and one door will be used for ground-level "stops." High-level "stations" will be spread over the 10.5-mile system, including all stations in the 3500-foot downtown subway now under construction.

The LRVs on the reconstructed line, and renovated PCCs on the other existing lines, will have a new access into the Golden Triangle, using a railroad bridge and tunnel as far as Midtown Station where the new subway begins. Destinations diverge here, some to the Wood and Gateway Stations, others into Penn Park, the Amtrak Station. The magnificent Pennsylvania Station is being renovated and will also be the interface for the East PATway (busway) sharing a railroad right-of-way.

The LRVs will have top window panels that open, as well as air conditioning. The contract price includes the cars, cost of training operating and maintenance personnel, and the cost of spare parts. Entry via the Panhandle Bridge over the Monongahela River will replace current use of the old and tired Smithfield Bridge at the northern mouth of the South Hills tunnel under Mt. Washington. A ramp will be built from there to the next river bridge "down the line." The P&LE Station Square still sees departure of a commuter train there and is now a Pittsburgh tourist "must" as well. The Mon Incline is across the street at this important streetcar stop, future Carson Station.

On the northern bank of the Mon, the LRVs will cross over the B&O tracks

used by PATrains, and a future LRT station is contemplated there. In the up-Allegheny River suburb of Blawnox, at least 51% of the dollar value of parts and labor for the new cars will be American (The Blaw-Knox Equipment Division of White Consolidated is located at Blawnox). With rising interest in light rail, and convenient river-rail access to the factory, a continuing LRV production is a possibility there.

The DuWag carbodies resemble heavy rail rapid transit trains, which some people see as an advantage for compatible operations. The LRVs will have horns and --of great interest to streetcar fanciers--gongs! --Robert J. Swan

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA on Aug 20 dedicated a $22 million "Downtown Transportation Project". Several blocks of bus mall and diamond lanes, combined with new sidewalks, utilities and a fountained pedestrian promenade and amphitheater are expected to stimulate transit riding and downtown vitality. But it took Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley to mention the beloved Red Cars, and he drew applause when he said, "This project will ultimately be a link when we build the Long Beach-Los Angeles light rail line."

A shipment of new DuWag trolleys for San Diego was being delivered thru the Port of Long Beach, and arrangements had been partially made to use the cars in the dedication ceremony. However, the builder backed down after getting a cold shoulder from Long Beach city hall. Transit catalyst Robert J. Swan was quite irked at Long Beach Mayor John Dever for his inaction on the trolley loan. In the photo above, Mr. Swan is examining the trolley shipment and pointing to the center car's destination sign, which reads "Lemon Grove." Lemon Grove is on the El Cajon-East-Branch proposed to receive service next. (Photo by James Washington)

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC on Aug 6 came to an agreement with the California Dept of Transportation about extending runs of some San Francisco Peninsula commute trains to San Francisco's Ferry Building at the foot of Market Street. Sources said the extension--of three daily roundtrips--could start by mid-November. (This item was inadvertently omitted from last issue.)

PRESIDENT REAGAN MAY be losing touch with public opinion on the issue of mass transit, suggests Robert Roberts in a Modern Railroads editorial (August). He points to a survey done by the Tulsa Tribune, in which respondents voted for a light rail system over more freeways by an 11 to one margin.

THE PLANNED METRORAIL system in Miami has already been trimmed back because of high budget projections, but the Miami Herald (Aug 23) is warning against trimming too much, which may be counterproductive. It warns the county commissioners not to settle for a ticketing system that requires exact change or tickets (when no vendors are available), because it means "foregoing spur-of-the-moment riders."

THE DALLAS AREA was studied by transit consultants, whose report was released Aug 4. It concluded that a transit line along the Southern Pacific tracks (it did not make a recommendation between bus and light rail) would carry the most people at the lowest cost. The line, designed to reduce traffic along the North Central Express way, would cost $492 million in 1980 dollars if designed as light rail, and would be 21.1 miles long with four of those miles on elevated track. It would serve about 51,250 riders per day. A busway would be 20 miles long and cost $639 million. A conventional rail line, of 24.4-mile length, would cost $1.04 billion.

WASHINGTON'S METRO SYSTEM recently adopted a 1983 operating budget of $337 million, or $28 million less than General Manager Richard Page called for to maintain present standards of service.

NEW YORK'S MTA is going to experience a delay in receiving the 316 new cars on order from the Budd Company, for the Long Island Rail Road and the Harlem, Hudson and New Haven commuter lines, it was revealed in late August. Because of the 7-month strike at Westinghouse Air Brake, which ended in June, Budd cannot meet the original contract schedule, and the first cars will arrive next March, five months late, while the complete order will be delivered a year behind schedule, in early 1985.

NEW BUS FACTORY for New York's MTA is apparently in the offing, to be built near New York City in conjunction with a foreign manufacturer--probably Renault or the Japanese firm of Hino--to produce new buses for New York streets.

FLYER INDUSTRIES LTD., the Canadian bus manufacturer was given a contract on Aug 23 to build 200 buses for Chicago's CTA at a price of $25.2 million. The firm is considering building a factory in the U.S., possibly near Chicago, since a large part of its business now comes from the U.S.

SEPTA RECENTLY EXPANDED a program which has run for several years to promote the renovation and restoration of its 47 stations in Philadelphia. SEPTA leases the stations to individuals or community groups at low cost provided they will improve the stations over a period of years.

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA PLANNERS this month made a prediction of the state of Sacramento's transit service in the year 2000: it should have 415 buses and 70 rail cars, and service about triple today's level, with a budget of about $70 million per year in 1982 dollars. Regional Transit hired a new planner who will work to find locations for rail stations, new bus stops, etc.

SEATTLE METRO TRANSIT system internal cost document shows that one dollar of diesel fuel in 1981 "purchased" 4.26 miles of diesel bus operation; but that same money spent on electricity for the system's trolley coaches bought 21.98 miles of electric bus operation.

ARTICULATED BUSES MAY be the fashionable rage now in transit planning, but Seattle's experience with them has not been good, at least in schedule-keeping. They have been pulled off the Seattle-Bothell suburban run weekends because they ran 20mins or more late on one trip, unable to keep the schedule 40-ft buses can.

THE MILWAUKEE ROAD'S 86-mile commuter operation in Chicago will be turned over to the Regional Transportation Authority, according to a late August agreement. The bankrupt Milwaukee Road is being reorganized and sold to the Grand Trunk Corp.

PORT JERVIS COMMUTER rail line on Aug 16 added more trains on weekdays between Suffern and Middletown. Trains use RDC equipment.

MIAMI AND CLEVELAND have completed an experimental use of paratransit prototype vehicles designed to transport the elderly and handicapped, UMTA announced Aug 13, and the trials were successful. The vehicles, built by McFarland Design and Minicars, Inc., are small, taxicab-type vehicles. UMTA said that as a result of the tests, the Port Authority of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, and the Florida DOT plan to buy 10-15 vehicles for revenue service over a period of two years.

TWO SAN FRANCISCO Commissions on Aug 24 approved a plan to operate "historic" streetcars on Market Street. The plan would involve retaining the present tracks on Market Street and using the existing PCC cars, and would include two new lines --one of them connecting the Caltrans/SP depot at 4th & Townsend with the Embarcadero, in conflict with the Caltrans plan to extend the rail commuter line itself to the Ferry Building at the Embarcadero.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY CENTER'S transportation lobbyist Harriet Holtzman-Parcells wrote on the Op-Ed page of the New York Times Aug 12 that it is "time to redirect Federal Interstate funding and, more broadly, all transportation funding away from highway construction and toward repair of the existing system and development of mass transit."

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC will continue to fight the proposed Oxnard-Los Angeles commuter train, it said early in August. It will press the issue in Federal courts altho a Federal judge in July refused to hear the railroad's case.

THE PANIC BOX

The following is a summary of major unusual occurrences on the Amtrak system during the month of May. A few days' data are missing.
Number in parentheses after train no. is date train left city of origin.

5-1 CAPITOL LIMITED #440-1(1) annulled betw Washington & Pittsburgh due to Chessie frt derail't just east of Rankin PA, on the P&LE Railroad.
5-2 SAN DIEGAN #584 terminated at San Juan Capistrano due to disabled ATSF frt.
5-2 BROADWAY LTD #41(2) hit 2 trespassers west of MetroPark NJ, delayed 66mins.
5-2 Three Corridor trains #177-174-142 delayed about 1hr, brush fire west of Stamford CT.
5-2 CAPITOL LTD #441(2) delayed 82mins when car rolled down embankment onto no. 1 track at East Hyndman PA.
5-3 SAN DIEGANS 577 & 576 delayed 80 & 47" by ATSF frt derail't at Escondido CA.
5-3 MONTREALER #61 delayed 87" at St. Albans for customs inspection.
5-5 Corridor trains 170 & 173 delayed 121 & 47mins by rubbish fire, 125th St NY.
5-5 Fire in Conrail communications bldg at South Branch Bridge, Chicago damaged CTC, radio & phone lines, delayed trains 318, 322, 324, 354, & 40(5).
5-6 ILLINOIS ZEPHYR #347 terminated after hitting car at Plano IL; psgrs transferred to train 5 to Galesburg, then bus; #348(7) annulled W. Quincy-Chicago.
5-6 14 Corridor trains delayed by catenary damage between Bowie & Gwynn MD.
5-6 CAPITOL LTD #441 delayed 1hr by rail pulled apart betw Cumberland & Connel'lle
5-6 CRESCENT #19(6) delayed 147" removing car 1128 with hotbox at Amherst VA.
5-6 COLONIAL #95(6) derailed car 20034 at Newport News yard 11:15pm; rerailed at 2:10am; train 94(7) will operate with panic box Newport News-Washington.
5-6 EMPIRE BUILDER #8(5) delayed 69" removing failed engine 322 & adding BN freight engine 6322 at Minot & Grand Forks ND.
5-7 Metroliner 604 terminated at Paoli due to fire in unit 829.
5-7 Empire Service train 483 annulled Albany-Schenectady when Livingston Avenue Bridge, Albany, failed at 7:15am; delayed: #72, 48, 448.
5-7 SUNSET LTD #2(7) detoured Pomona-West Colton CA, SP frt derail, delay 72"on UP
5-7 Metroliner 618 terminated Downingtown PA, delay 96", transformer overheating.
5-7 Corridor trains 168 & 173 delayed by brush fire betw Shore Line Jct & Branford on Boston Division.
5-7 SF ZEPHYR #5(6) had engine fire at Denver in unit 356, replaced by UP 9005.
5-7 COAST STARLIGHT #11(7) delayed 70" after SP frt hit auto at Marion OR.
5-8 COAST STARLIGHT #11(8) delayed 2'19" by SP frt with hot box bet K.Falls & Duns.
5-9 COAST STARLIGHT #14(9) delayed 61" hitting car betw Martinez & Davis CA.
5-10 MONTREALERS of 5-10 & 11 terminated at Springfield with bus to Montreal due to B&M frt derail't at West River VT, 2mis north of Brattleboro
5-10 B&O frt derail't of 27 coal cars betw Hancock WV & Cumberland MD disrupted schedule of CAPITOL LTD; restored to service 6pm 5-11.
5-10 Empire Service train 77 annulled due to CR Harlem Local derail't at GCT, NY.
5-10 EAGLE #21(9) delayed 89", car 38020 off at Little Rock due to hot box.
5-11 LAKE SHORE LTD #48(10) engine 489 died at 138th St NY, delayed 75mins.
5-11 SHAWNEE #391 hit by car N of Centralia IL, delayed 66", car 1248 damaged.
5-11 Train 416 was delayed 73" due to SPV 991 engine failure; trains 421 & 157 also delayed.
5-11 Kids throwing rocks broke windshield on engine 939 of train 186; delay 1hr.
5-12 EAGLE #21(11) delayed 130" by frt derail at Goodwin TX on MoPac.
5-12 HOOSIER STATE due to track work on B&O at Calumet Jct IL detours Maynard-Thornton Jct on GTW, to Dalton on L&N, then joint tracks with L&N-CWI to Amtrak Jct, #3-4 tracks into Chicago; delay about 30mins.
5-12 CAPITOL LTD #440(11) delayed on Chessie betw Orleans Road & Weverton due to weather slow order and prior derailment damage, 100mins.

5-12 EMPIRE BUILDER #7(11) delayed 122" in Montana due to sun kinks & track work.
5-12 BROADWAY LTD #40(12) delayed 90" Valparaiso, trouble with engine 316.
5-12 Amtrak track work near Niles & Dowagiac MI and Conrail work near Dearborn & Ann Arbor will delay Detroit trains, delay will continue thru the summer.
5-13 EAGLE #22(11) was delayed 89" for three washouts on the MoPac, 62" behind a freight on the MKT, and 40" on ATSF when engine 313 ran out of fuel just outside Ft. Worth depot; ATSF switcher pulled train into depot.
5-14 SAN DIEGAN #580 terminated at Oceanside due to engine 254 dead; psgr delay 52"
5-14 COAST STARLIGHT #11(13) hit tractor-trailer bet San Jose & Salinas, damaged engine 246; no injuries; 125-min delay; SP engine 9019 added.
5-14 ADIRONDACK #68(14) delayed 51" by customs & 85" by D&H track work.
5-14 Corridor train 187 delayed 100" when engine 927 died; #287, 175, 125, 51 also
5-14 CRESCENT #19(14) 2 windows car 4624 broken by rocks,Charlottesville/delayed.
5-14 Utica NY station burglarized when agent out at meal; $92 taken.
5-15 Baltimore tunnel disruption; see RTN #245. Massive Corridor disruption.
5-15 Corridor train 175 delayed 110" by engine 941 failure.
5-16 PIONEER #25(14) derailed one wheel of engine 225 at Cobb ID due to broken axle; train terminated at LaGrande, psgrs bused on; delay: 215".
5-17 ILLINOIS ZEPHYR #347(17) terminated Galesburg due to BN frt Derail't ahead.
5-17 SCL freight broke in two at Cromarte NC and a run-in occurred: a 16-axle flat car loaded with a generator telescoped the car ahead. #89 delayed 15".
5-17 SF ZEPHYR #6(16) & 5(17) detoured Hastings-Lincoln via Aurora NE due to BN frt derail't of 21 empty flat cars 30 miles west of Lincoln NE.
5-17 LAKE SHORE LTD #49(16) delayed 90" at Erie & Cleveland, brake trouble unit 343
5-17 EMPIRE BUILDER #8(16) delayed 80" at Macon MT due to broken rail.
5-17 ADIRONDACK #68(17) delayed 80" by D&H track work north of Plattsburgh.
5-18 Empire Service trains 63 & 73 were delayed 85 & 30" when a CR freight derailed four cars at Batavia NY, & a sun kink was repaired near derailment site.
5-18 Thunderstorms knocked out signals near West Dowagiac MI, delaying trains 355 & 354 128 & 92".
5-18 Bees escaped from a container in baggage-mail car of the SILVER STAR #82(17) stinging two baggagemen at Richmond, who required anti-toxin injections. Car was fumigated at Washington before more unloading was done, and baggage was sent to Richmond on a later train.
5-19 CAPITOL LTD #440(18) terminated at Rocks WV due to disabled Chessie freight ahead & track work on other track between Pepco & Rockville MD; psgrs delayed 4hrs; #441(19) delayed 130", #701(19) delayed 51".
5-19 ANN RUTLEDGE #303 delayed 132" in Bloomington with oil leak.
5-19 All signals on the D&H went out at 1:30pm betw Schenectady & Rouses Point, delaying both ADIRONDACKS.
5-20 EMPIRE BUILDER #27(18) detoured Pasco-Portland on UP due to BN frt derail't at Mary Hill WA, missing three stops. Total delay: 86mins.
5-20 CAPITOL LTD #441(20) delayed 90" by engine trouble, unit 270 at Tacoma Park.
5-20 EAGLE #22(18) delayed 73" at Fada TX by defective hose betw engine & 32042.
5-23 SF ZEPHYR #5(21) hit trespasser, apparent suicide,at Berkeley CA.
5-23 Stalled auto between tracks 1&2 at Stoney Run Road Crossing delayed Corridor trains 142, 82, 116, 184 & 284 from 5 to 68mins. Engine 941 damaged.
5-23 Corridor train 186 delayed 71" by lost brake pipe on rear (baggage) car.
5-24 SCL frt derailed 10mis south of Jacksonville FL station; SILVER STAR #81/91 of 5/24 will detour Jacksonville-Auburndale via Wildwood on Baldwin Subdiv., missing Palatka, Deland, Sanford, Winter Park, Orlando & Kissimmee.
5-24 TWILIGHT LTD #354 delayed at Niles MI 96", engine troubles, unit 264.
5-25 EAGLE #22(23) delayed 10hrs (ten hours) behind MoPac frt derail't 3 miles N of Malvern AR; 2 buses ran St. Louis-Chicago to replace #22; #21(25) delayed 4hrs north of derailment scene.
5-25 CRESCENT #19(24) hit car at Slidell LA, fatality; delayed 52".

(continued on page 20)

BY AMTRAK TO THE STATE FAIR

To help travelers reach the California State Fair in Sacramento, which runs Aug 24 thru Sep 6, Amtrak and Caltrans are offering bus connections from the Sacramento Amtrak station to the Fairgrounds for riders of the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA and the SAN JOAQUIN (trains 710-711).

To inaugurate the special service, Amtrak added two Amfleet cars to the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA on Aug 24 to carry members of the press and dignitaries to the California capital from the Bay Area for the grand opening of the 129th annual State Fair. This was the first year that such a rail connection was possible, with the advent of trains 15 & 18.

The northbound train operated exactly on time, leaving the fog-bound Bay Area at 7:15am with nine cars, the last two of them full of Amtrak and Caltrans guests. As the train curved northward along the Bay, pulling into the sunshine beyond Martinez, Amtrak hosts poured complimentary coffee, cocktails and Champagne for the guests ("Would you like some Champagne to go with your Bloody Mary?"). At 9:09 (early as usual) the train drew to a stop at Sacramento, and outside the station waited two Regional Transit (RT) buses ready for the 15-minute ride.

Governor Brown, former baseball star Joe DiMaggio, and other political dignitaries officiated at the ribbon cutting to open the Fair at about 10am, and the crowd streamed toward the gates. The Amtrak guests entered by another gate and were ushered into a Governor's Brunch under a big yellow tent.

Besides the advertised buses, there was another bus today, leaving at noon, to connect with train 5, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, for those guests who had to return earlier to their offices. We used that bus, along with excursion leader Art Lloyd, and thus there was about an hour to look over the Expo. It sports a monorail ("Mini-Rail") with two electric trains that gives one an overview of the grounds. Train 5, 38mins late at Reno, was into Sacramento 25mins late, and reached Oakland 11mins early.

DISCOVERY OF AN "UNKNOWN" PASSENGER TRAIN

I may have discovered a passenger train that most people don't know about. It runs between Seton Portage and Lillooet, B.C., on the British Columbia Railway from Sep 1 to Jun 30 inclusive. Trains 7 & 8 are listed as mixed trains. An employee told me it is a school train.

By railroad the run is a flat 19 miles along the edge of Seton Lake. By road one must travel about 45 miles--mostly a good graded gravel road, but the last six or seven miles are over a mountain pass with what seem to be at least a 1000-foot climb up one side and a 2000-foot drop down to Seton Lake, with at least 20 or 30 3mph switchbacks, probably impassible in the winter.

I saw a coach in Lillooet but didn't pay much attention to it, assuming it was a maintenance of way car, and didn't learn about the mixed train until an employee gave me an employee timetable further down the line.

Southbound train 8 leaves Lillooet at 5:45am and arrives at Seton Portage at 7:15am, with stops at MacNeill, Retaskit, shalalth and Seton. Northbound train 7 leaves Seton Portage at 7:15am and reaches Lillooet at 8:10am, with the same stops. Evidently the primary function of the train is to carry school children to Lillooet in the morning; they could return in the afternoon on regular passenger train #2 which leaves Lillooet at 3:25pm and reaches Seton Portage at 4:05 pm on its route to North Vancouver, making the same stops.

RTN should send Sylvia Blishak with her engineer's cap and overalls to ride the train with a bunch of Indian schoolkids. I'm sure the kids would get a kick out of it.

--David Ribbe

UP'S #3985 STEAMS THRU UTAH IN A FIERY BLAZE OF GLORY

by Ted and Sylvia Blishak

Author's note: While engines are commonly referred to as "she" rather than "it", in liturature and in conversation, the #3985 is always called "he." In the interest of realism, we have used the masculine pronoun to describe the main character of our story.....

Fire engines can be an essential part of modern-day steam runs, as local fire departments are often called upon to use their pumpers to water the thirsty steam engines. However, on the first revenue run of Union Pacific's restored, coal-fired "Challenger," fire-trucks, with sirens in fullcry, were called out to extinguish a trail of brush fires ignited by the flaming cinders from the huge 4-6-6-4's stack!

The Challenger was restored by UP employees in time to make his debut at Railfair '81 in Sacramento. On that journey, he was somewhat eclipsed by the more familiar face of UP #8444, on the point. But on June 26, at Salt Lake City's Union Station, #3985 was the lone star of "Steam Show 1982," sponsored by the Promontory Chapter of the N.R.H.S. The event included a railfan excursion to Provo and return. A repeat was scheduled for June 27, and both were sellouts. UP provided portable steps so that enthusiasts could walk through the engine's cab before the run began.

UP's grand style was immediately evident. Bob Neeley, Engineer, had his name painted over the cab in white litters. Coal was piled high in the tender, and there was no diesel assistance, even for switching. The recreation-baggage car behind the tender, painted UP gold, was deluxe, with wall-to-wall carpet, closed circuit TV with action inside the cab, and earphones connected to a stereo microphone outside for stack-talk listening. Cocktails, beer, and soft drinks were on sale in the car, and goggles were available.

All ten of UP's yellow chair cars were on the consist, seating 44 passengers each in spacious comfort. Lounge Cars #6206 and #6203 had snacks and drinks available, and Dome Coach #7006 carried the markers. (Apparently the open-platform observation car with the striped awning that UP once used on railfan trips is permanently retired at the Golden, Colorado Museum.)

Two groups of entertainers were aboard; a barbershop quartet harmonized, and a family of three accompanied by an auto-harp and wearing overalls sang railroad songs.

Amtrak provided paper headrest covers for the coach seats; "Getting into Training" shopping bags for the on-board souvenir concession; and Photo Line Manager "Diesel Dan." (We had met Dan on a San Joaquin inagural a few years ago -- at that time, he worked in Amtrak's reservations center.) Nattily attired in an Amtrak conductor's uniform, Dan announced each photo runby and explained photo-line procedures. "People have come from as far away as Australia to ride behind, and photograph, this engine," he explained.

At 10 AM, with two loud and low moans of the whistle, we were off. Photographers lined the tracks, which run down the middle of a city street, then south between the base of the Wasatch Range and Interstate 15 on the Provo Subdivision.

Diesel Dan explained that all vestibules, as well as the baggage car, were staffed with N.R.H.S. volunteers who could provide goggles to keep cinders out of passengers' eyes. A doctor and nurse were staffing a first-aid station set up in the forward lounge car.

Several hundred people waited near our first runby site, while on the freeway about 1/4 mile below us, traffic paced the train and stopped when the engine did.

A news helicopter paced. A local TV show, "PM Magazine," interviewed us, as did

young Heather Nelson of the Salt Lake City Tribune. "What makes a steam engine so exciting?" she asked. "Why do so many people come out to see it?"

"A steam engine is one of the few machines that people can relate to," we replied. "Most of their moving parts are visible, they 'breath,' and they all have individual sounds --yet one diesel is very much like another diesel."

The runby was inpressive, with a huge black plume, cinders falling like rain, and clanking, puffing, and hissing sounds.

Back aboard, we could look down to the Great Salt Lake a few miles away. The Wasatch Mountains, showing snowy tops through the clear desert air, were a contrast to the 90° temperature. Inside, the vintage air conditioning struggled to keep the temperature down to 80°. Soft drinks were soon sold out; but the beer held out. The UP bartenders wore nametags with the slogan, "We can handle it."

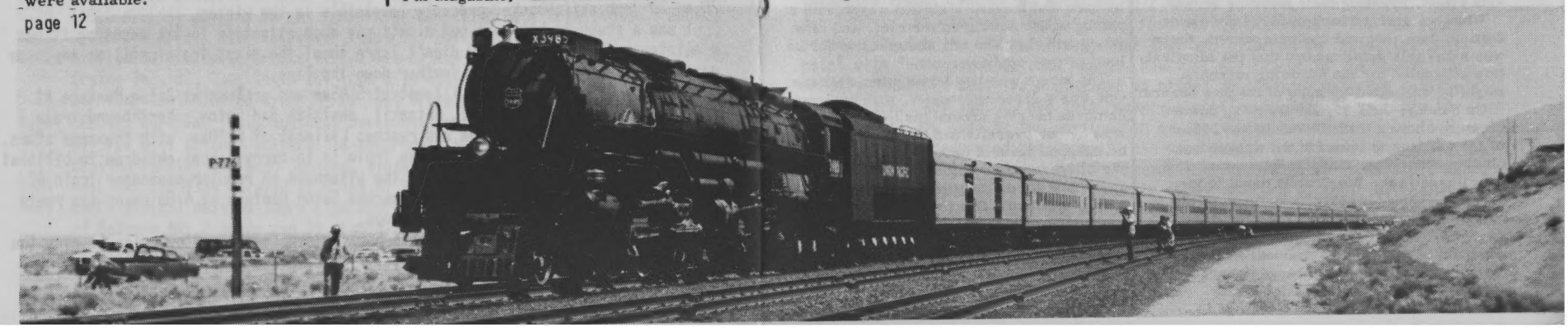
We passed through a short stretch of farm country where horses and cattle bolted in panic when the world's largest operating steam engine, his double exhaust snorting inky cinders, appeared. (We even saw a back-yard cat streak for cover, moving faster than any feline we'd ever seen!)

At Provo, we turned on a wye and headed back towards Salt Lake without detraining. For our second photo stop, on the way back, we scrambled to the top of a ridge overlooking a curve of track with a mountain backdrop. As we detrained, we could see that all the smoke up ahead was not coming from the 3985's stack; a grassfire was smoking furiously alongside the engine. UP employees, prepared with shovels, were busy fighting it.

The engine backed his train around the curve and out of sight behind a sage-covered hill about a mile downline. Photo lines worked well here; if everyone stood on the flat area on top of the rise, they were automatically lined up. A huge black cloud started to rise; and slowly, then gaining speed, the mighty Challenger rounded the curve, chuffing and belching coal smoke. But the fireman had overdone it. As the engine approached his camera-snapping fans, the safety valves started hissing steam, and #3985 drifted past us with a clean stack!

As we resumed our ride, we saw that an area about half the size of a football field had burned from the 3985's cinders, but the UP crew had quelled it. We heard that a water truck followed the train, although we didn't actually see it.

As we picked up speed, our on-board entertainers sang, "Listen to the jingle, the



rumble and the roar, as the mighty rushing engine...." This was a grand arrangement of the Wabash Cannon Ball, with blasts of the Challenger's whistle coming in right on cue.

But outside, in the tinder-dry grass, an alarming sight appeared. Patches about two feet across were blazing brightly in dozens of places from the engine's cinders. We were concerned because a photographer with a tripod was in the area. A few minutes later, we heard sirens, and looked back to see a wall of smoke and flames along the tracks.

The next morning's Salt Lake Tribune would show photos of the fire, which burned 75 acres of mountainside near Draper. It took four fire departments until 10:30 that night to extinguish the blaze; one fireman was treated for smoke inhalation. No other injuries were mentioned, so apparently the photographer escaped unharmed.

In spite of all UP's careful preparations, the wind and weather created fire hazard conditions they weren't counting on. It was a shame to have such a damper on the good public relations the special run created.

We wondered if coal-fired engines were fire hazards in the days when they were in frequent use. But talking with some friends who grew up in the area, we learned that the engines created a swath of cinders along the tracks that discouraged grass from growing --in effect, creating their own fire breaks.

When we arrived back at Salt Lake Union Station, late, hot and cinder-covered, there was some talk going around that the identical trip scheduled for the following morning might be cancelled because of the fire hazard.

On Sunday, June 27, the morning dawned clear and hotter than the day before. Many of the railfans in town for the weekend, including ourselves, made an early-morning pilgrimage to the Rio Grande depot to view one of the thrice-weekly departures of the non-Amtrak anachronism, the Rio Grande Zephyr. This gleaming, stainless-steal survivor of art deco magnificance carried four domes, as well as a baggage car, dining car, and several coaches. Not a dent or a chip in any of them! Suddenly, the headlight and Mars light flashed on. The lion-colored GM diesels with their streamlined, leonine profile were humming impatiently. A few blasts of the horn, a rumble growing to a roar, a plume of exhaust that would do credit to a steam engine, and the engines with their silver mirage of a train accelerated quickly and headed for Denver. The round-end dome observation car gave it a classy rear profile.

A mile up the line, we could see a tall plume of coal smoke hanging in the still air --the Challenger was under steam.

We drove up and found a streetside spot near an S-curve where the tracks came out of the station. Two husky toots, and #3985 began to crawl towards us.

This was an excellent spot to observe the Challenger's articulated design as the pilot and headlight turned right into the curve, while the boiler and rear cylinders and drivers continued to point straight ahead. The huge black behemoth strolled towards us, warning bell clanging, and pivoted around the curve and began to chuff. Steam now grizzled the black smoke; the two sets of drivers circled around and around in mesmerizing patterns. The whistle moaned a goodbye, the fireman gave us a wave, and #3985 was off on another day's work, flanked by cars and trucks, a station wagon with a photographer sitting on the roof, and kids, young and old, who ran along beside for as long as they could keep up.

The street was lined with other railfans. One was a Japanese tourist, with numerous cameras hanging around his neck. Facinated by our overalls and hats and buttons, he snapped several photos of us.
We wondered if he'd come all the way from Japan just to see the Challenger, but we never found out. Due to the emotion of the moment, and his limited English, all he could say was, "Thank you!"

We echo the phrase. Thanks, Union Pacific, for keeping big-time steam alive in today's world.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

"AMTRAK NEEDS REFORM" is the heading of an Op-Ed page article in the New York Times of Aug 17. The article is a followup to the anti-Amtrak editorial of Jul 31, reported last issue. It's by Allen Kraus, who is described as having "monitored Amtrak for three years as a member of the Congressional Budget Office's staff." All of this came out of the Congressional Budget Office's study dated July 1982 of Amtrak funding. The 85-page study, titled "Federal Subsidies for Rail Passenger Service: An Assessment of Amtrak", was written by Sally A Ferris, special assistant to Director Alice M. Rivlin of the CBO, under the supervision of David Bodde and Damian Kulash of CBO's Natural Resources and Commerce Division. In the preface to the study, the author acknowledges the "helpful comments and contributions" of Allen Kraus (author of the Op-Ed page article) and Richard Weissbrod, "both formerly of CBO".....

ALLEN KRAUS'S ARTICLE begins this way: "Americans love passenger trains. Seldom is love so blind. Passenger trains hold little promise for adequate financial and social returns. America must act to cut its losses." We don't know which three years of Amtrak's 11-year existence Kraus monitored as a CBO member, but they don't seem to have been recent ones, for he's not up-to-date with his facts. He sais that subsidies now cover "more than 60 percent" of Amtrak's operating budget. False. Amtrak in the present fiscal year, with one month left to go, is meeting or bettering its Congressional mandate to cover 50% of operating costs with revenues. And it is steadily working toward covering 100% of them by 1985. So how is it that Kraus concludes that the biggest change in the relationship between Amtrak and Congress must be for Amtrak to cover 50% of operating costs? It's already doing that. Kraus, where have you been? And what's more, Kraus believes that to get Amtrak shaped up it should divest itself of its long distance routes and everything except the NE Corridor, some routes "around Chicago and along part of the West Coast." How naive! The whole system would fall apart if that were done and the cost of running the remaining portions would skyrocket. Kraus claims that Amtrak's "market prospects are poor" because it covers only 2% of the domestic common-carrier market. This may be true if you look at the whole country, including those states and portions of states where Amtrak runs no trains. But that's not fair. If you consider those area that Amtrak actually serves, it gets 21% of the market. In some favorable places, such as L.A.-San Diego, it actually nabs almost 50% of the common carrier market. Here we should note that in the CBO report itself the authors gave an erroneous figure for Amtrak's market share in 1980. They said it fell from .5% of all intercity travel (including auto) in 1972 to .3% in 1980. The correct figure for 1980 is .8%--Amtrak's market share rose during that time. The two women responsible for the CBO report say that they are offering an "objective analysis" with "no recommendations" made. However, any reader of the report can readily detect an anti-train bias and an effort to consider only the negatives in the case. Why the CBO did this report is still a mystery to us. Usually such reports are done at the instigation of some Congressman who requests them. But if someone requested this report, his name is not mentioned. And while the authors have not gone around making recommendations blatantly to kill off Amtrak, they have looked aside, apparently, while former members of their office who helped on the report go off and write recommendations for newspaper editorial pages in an obvious effort to do Amtrak in. It makes one wonder whether some representative of America's tottering auto industry was behind the whole thing...

BURLINGTON NORTHERN COMPANY rumor mill is the heaviest it's been since the 1970 merger. Hundreds of rumors are coming off the company grapevine, and of course many can't be taken seriously. Some of the more interesting: (1) That BN may seek to suspend temporarily all operation over Stampede Pass in Washington State as a cost-cutting measure; (2) That operations Spokane-Pasco may be reversed, with trains going east on the ex-NP line and west on the ex-SP&S route to save up to $1 million in fuel bills on the climb westbound from Spokane each year; (3) That BN will de-emphasize its "Inside Gateway" line thru Klamath Falls to Bieber and interchange as much traffic as possible with SP at Eugene OR, not wanting to give business to the UP-dominated WP at Biever, possibly in retaliation for UP's pushing into the BN monopoly of the Powder River Basin coal empire in Wyoming; (4) That BN may seek to abandon portions of the ex-NP main line in western Montana and route all traffic via the Glacier Park line to avoid the heavy grades at Mullan Pass near Helena and Bozeman Pass west of Livingston (making revival of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA impossible); (5) That BN has postponed indefinitely rebuilding of the ex-Milwaukee Road line over Snoqualmie Pass in Washington State after announcing in the spring that rebuilding would begin this summer.....

STEAMSHIP "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" got off to a slow start on the Seattle-Victoria run this season, with patronage down 40% in May from May of 1981. The recession is blamed. The ship made charter runs from Everett and Bellingham WA before the Apr 30 startup of the regular season, and also is reported to be set for a cruise from Vancouver B.C. to Howe Sound and return on Oct 4, one day after the regular season ends Oct 3 from Seattle.....

SEATTLE-PORTLAND AMTRAK patronage has been light, with crew members blaming high fares for a part of the drop. A receding economy in both the Portland and the Seattle areas also has been blamed, with aerospace and lumber-related employment falling in the Northwest.....

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SOME MORE ERRORS spotted by readers in the current Amtrak system timetable: (1) The CHESAPEAKE's schedule on page 20 has its Philadelphia station correctly included in the alphabetical list on page 53, but its Washington station is omitted from page 54. (2) Eastbound (#48) LAKE SHORE LIMITED's stop is shown at Amsterdam NY on page 24 but omitted from page 34.....

HIGH-SPEED TRAINS are eye-catching and interesting to the general public, as shrewd businessmen and advertisers know. One Savings and Loan in Florida uses them in its ads in a very eye-catching manner. Flagler Federal S&L advertises in the Miami Herald (Aug 26) with drawings of the French TGV and the British HST side-by-side ("Ride Flagler Federal's two high-interest savings vehicles").....

N&W STEAM ENGINE 611 ran from Birmingham to Atlanta on Aug 20, Atlanta to Spencer on Aug 21 and Spencer-Roanoke Aug 22. Reports reader Lyle Key, the loco really looks great, and Donald Purdie, N&W Trainmaster-Steam, told him it ran beautifully from Birmingham to Atlanta.....

A WASHOUT ON the MoPac near Tiptop MO on Aug 26 caused a detour of the EAGLE. Train 22 with 9 cars detoured via the SSW (Cotton Belt) Dexter MO to Illmo MO on the Pine Bluff Division Aug 27.....

TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA STATION will be renovated. Nevada County plans to buy the depot and land from SP, modernize the building, and lease it back to Amtrak and Greyhound, with help from Caltrans funding. Construction should start in two years. Caltrans is negotiating with Amtrak for a year-round bus connection from the Truckee station to Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley.....

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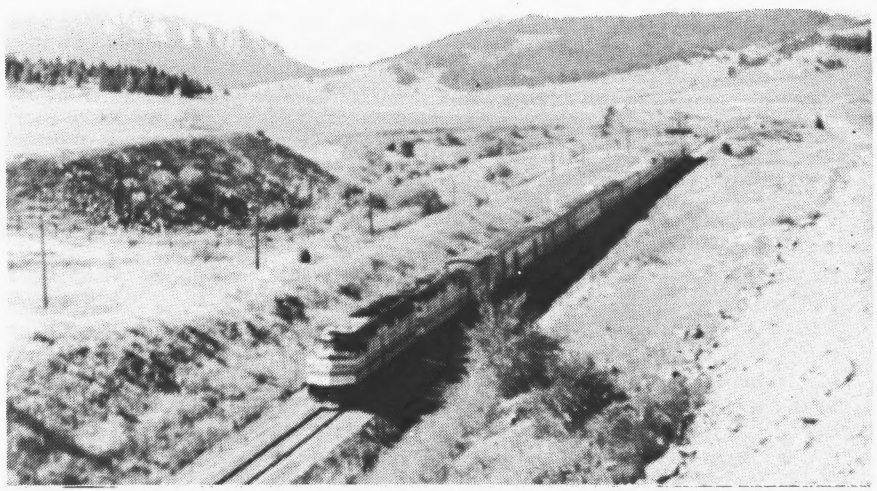
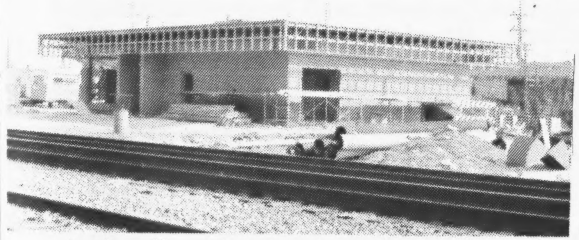
THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE picked up the Allen Kraus opinion article from the New York Times (discussed on page 15) and ran it Aug 19 under the heading "No way to run a railroad".....

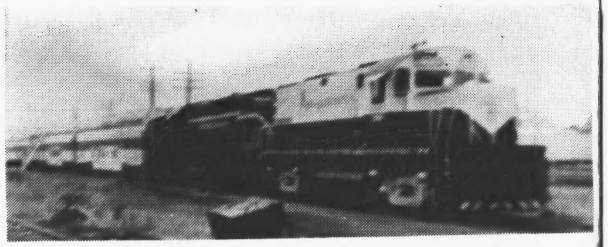


HERE'S THE TRAIN they're trying to revive in Montana. W. R. McGee provided this photo of the next-to-last official eastbound NORTH COAST HIAWATHA taken on Sep 27, 1979. The train is about to crest Bozeman Pass (5592 feet in elevation) and enter a 3015-foot tunnel. Rocky Canyon is seen in the distance. The State of Montana on Aug 5 submitted to Amtrak a formal proposal to restore the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, which would run as before between Fargo ND and Sandpoint ID, joining with the EMPIRE BUILDER at each end of the route. In an effort to cut costs and provide fairness for both the northern and southern routes, Montana is proposing that the train run 6 days per week on each route, alternating east and west runs. North Dakota officials were to submit their own proposal late in August, and Amtrak promised to visit with local officials in mid-September after it has made its own appraisal of the situation. The idea is that the two states will jointly help fund the train under the 403-B clause. The State of North Dakota and mayors of cities on the EMPIRE BUILDER route were not favorable to the idea of reducing service on that route. Amtrak said it might come up with its own proposal. Mr. McGee said that the southern train would have to run via Helena, as the Butte line is being dismantled by BN at present. The Montana Dept. of Commerce, which submitted the proposal, pointed out that 52.6 percent of the state's population lives near the southern route, and 17.7 percent near the northern, EMPIRE BUILDER, route. The former population has grown 18.5% in the last ten years, while the latter has grown 9%.....



HAMMOND, INDIANA STATION under construction looked like this when Jack Ferry photographed it recently. The station is scheduled for completion this fall.....

AMTRAK SOLD 127 of the 131 cars offered for sale in August. No domes were included in the sale, which brought Amtrak over $500,000. Highest price bid for a car was $20,000. Most of the cars were damaged. There were some Budd stainless steel cars among the 131, and some round-end observation cars. CBS TV news on Aug 18 included a feature on the car sale. There is a rumor that representatives of China's railways are looking for surplus dome cars to purchase from the U.S.....



U&MV NRHS CHAPTER trip out of Utica NY that was reported on last issue by Alfred Gorney used the train shown here--two NYS&W Alco locomotives, #2000 & 2002, and four full-length dome cars purchased from Auto-Train. Mr. Gorney took this photo, which was not ready to print in our last issue. Date of the trip was July 3, and the location of the photo was Utica.....

BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak at its Aug 18 meeting approved the appointment of Don Braziers as Group VP-Finance and Administration and Chuck Hayward to VP-Finance and Treasurer. The Board okayed a study of the feasibility of connecting the NE Corridor and the NY-Albany Corridor, at a cost of $575,000 for the study. (The Rail Safety and Service Improvement Act which passed the House on Aug 12 provides funds to restore the Westside Connector, a rail line along the west side of Staten Island which links Penn Station with the Conrail Hudson River mainline.) Restoring the Westside Connector would allow Amtrak to operate all its trains out of Penn Station. The Board approved the purchase of two slumber-coaches to be converted to head-end power, and the sale of two baggage cars, #1177 and 1220, that were damaged in the Jun 15 derailment of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. The Board also approved funds to begin improvement of the braking systems on Superliner and Amfleet I cars. It also okayed continuation of the upgrading of Amtrak's Michigan track and a railroad bridge in Niles MI.....

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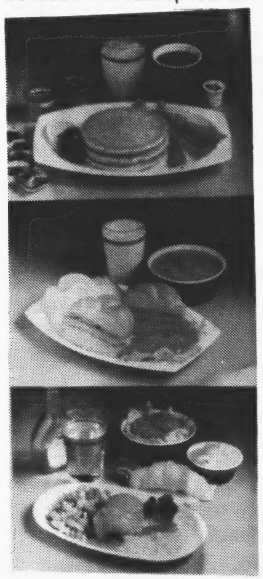
RAIL SAFETY & SERVICE Improvement Act, passed by the House Aug 12, includes, in addition to funds for restoration of the Westside Connector, authorization for the Federal Government to sell the Alaska Railroad to the State. It also authorizes more money to transfer rail commuter service from Conrail to various Northeast commuter authorities. And it provides funds to upgrade the rail line between Philadelphia and Atlantic City.....



"DINING ACROSS AMERICA--an Amtrak experience" is the title of a small color brochure Amtrak very recently produced. One of its six folded sides is shown at left: it carries photos of breakfast, lunch and dinner selections. The brochure is made up primarily of photos of people wining and dining on Amtrak trains. Says the text: "One of the pleasures of Amtrak travel is a visit to the dining car. The appetizing menu selections... the friendly service...the interesting people you'll meet are all a part of 'the Amtrak experience.'" NARP has verified that Amtrak President Claytor is "extremely concerned" about the statutory food service requirement and its impact on dining car service, and reportedly he is working on the problem...

BULLET TRAIN LINE proposed between San Diego and L.A. got a big boost on Aug 31 when the California legislature, just before adjourning, passed and sent to Gov. Brown a bill that establishes a commission to sell $1.25 billion in bonds to finance the Bullet Train line.....

SAN DIEGO TROLLEY had 3½ new cars delivered this month--3½ because only half of an articulated car is carried at one time on a truck bed. The entire order

should be in by the end of the year. By the end of September, the first segment of double track should be completed, with the line becoming completely double track by year-end. The system will try to close C Street from second to eighth by year-end to make it a trolley mall.....

FINAL AEM-7 LOCOMOTIVE for the NE Corridor, the 47th, has been received. The AEM-7 was designed in Sweden and built in the U.S.....

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY LEWIS, reports NARP, recently completed a trip from Chicago to Seattle on the EMPIRE BUILDER and enjoyed himself a great deal. His train reached Seattle a little ahead of schedule.....

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MEXICAN TRAIN RIDE from Mexico City to Guadulajara to Mexicali was told by Lawrence Rout in a Wall Street Journal front page article on Aug 24. It's a sad tale of Mexican poverty and wornout, inefficient trains. One error we noted: he claims the Pullman sleepers on the Mexican trains are "roomier than their present U.S. counterparts." His northbound ride was, he noted, just a few days before the southbound counterpart derailed into a ravine, killing 34 persons.....

INTERSTATE HIGH SPEED Rail Compact is seriously considering LRC trains built in Canada rather than Bullet Train-type equipment for the proposed Midwestern high-speed lines. Ohio votes in November whether to adopt a 1¢ sales tax to fund a passenger rail line for the 3-C corridor--Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati. The line could become an LRC line if lobbyists from Bombardier, the LRC manufacturer, are convincing. Midwestern officials were treated to test rides on the LRC on its Toronto-Montreal route, and they were reportedly impressed. Rail writer F. K. Plous Jr. wrote on the topic for the Christian Science Monitor this month (Aug 12).....

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SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR derailment of Jun 15 in Iowa resulted in two baggage cars going into the flood waters. The train was carrying mail bound for Denver and the San Francisco Bay Area. Another publication reported that some of its Bay Area readers received copies that had been in the wreck. They were delayed two weeks, were placed in plastic envelopes, and had been handstamped "Received from train wreck" or "Damaged in train accident, beyond control of U.S. Postal Service". Some of the mail was evidently wet and had been dried out before delivery.....

L.A.-SAN DIEGO patronage has been good this summer, reports an observer in that area, with 8-10 cars on many SAN DIEGANS. Racing at the Del Mar track north of San Diego accounts for quite a bit of the business, and trains that serve the races there are reportedly long and full.....

THE TWO SLUMBERCOACHES to be purchased by Amtrak (see Board of Directors item above) are reportedly owned by Board member Ross Rowland of Lebanon NJ. The 16-10 cars once belonged to the MoPac and were used on the Golden Spike Centennial train in 1969. They will be converted to HEP and should become numbers 2057 and 2058 in Amtrak's roster.....

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PROFESSOR RONALD SHECK'S study entitled "Amtrak 90: A Route to Success" is at last published. The volume, a 75-page executive summary of the massive study, is going to be submitted to the Amtrak Board, DOT and other transportation agencies. We will have the information soon on obtaining copies of it for those who have not yet ordered it. Sheck is a Geography and Planning Professor at New Mexico State University.....

1982 WORLD'S FAIR in Knoxville TN included a display train called the "Pullman Palace Hotel". Assembled by L&N in its West Knoxville Yard, the trainset consisted of car 92 "Black Hawk", "Louisa Alcott", and Erie 400 (this consist recorded July 14 by Lyle Key). Also on hand for Family Lines' company purposes were Georgia RR #300 business car and L&N 43266 "Carnival Club" tavern-lounge.....

RENO, NEVADA HAS ABANDONED its plan to lower the SP railroad tracks in downtown Reno since a bond issue to finance the project failed to pass in 1980.....

THE BALTIMORE TUNNEL, the wall of which shifted on May 15 and caused damage to residences built above the 8200-foot tunnel, forced residents above the tunnel to move out. It was announced on Aug 7 that Amtrak, the Federal Government and the city of Baltimore will share the costs of the damage to the buildings. The city will pay half of it, and Amtrak and the FRA will each pay one-quarter (total will be about $300,000). All but one of the homes will be demolished, and the tunnel-top site will become a park.....

THE NORTH STAR will stop running after Labor Day, when the Minnesota state subsidy runs out (you've heard this before), and Gov. Al Quie is opposed to further funding for the train. However, Duluth-area citizens want the train to continue, at least on weekends until mid-October, for tourists. There is a possibility that the continuation may occur if accounting shows that there is actually some subsidy money remaining. Train operations could recommence next spring.....

RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR was annulled Aug 7 and 8 due to a derailment near the apparently aptly-named railroad location of Troublesome, Colorado.....

AMTRAK PACKAGE EXPRESS door-to-door delivery service began in California on Aug 16. It uses the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA and some SAN DIEGANS to serve San Diego, Santa Ana, L.A., Oakland, San Francisco and Sacramento. Sky Courier provides the door-to-door pickup and delivery to and from trains and callbacks to customers when deliveries are completed. Rates are low: a 25-lb package sent L.A. to San Francisco costs $19.10.....

AMTRAK FAMILY DAYS celebrations will be held in Albany-Rensselaer Oct 9-10 and at Boston's South Station on Oct 16-17. Superliners will be featured at these events, brought into Boston via the B&A Division for clearance's sake.....

News in this issue is updated thru Aug 31, 1982.

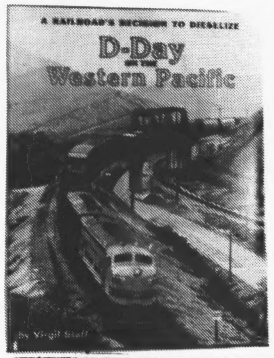
PANIC BOX (continued from page 10)

5-25 DESERT WIND #35(24) delayed 1hr betw Ogden & Salt Lake due to power failure in UP Clearfield Yard, 17 mis south of Ogden.
5-26 CARDINAL #51(26) detoured Washington-Cincinnati via Cumberland & Parkersburg missing all stops & leaving Washington 188" late, due to Conrail frt derail at RF&P RO Tower, Arlington VA.
5-26 Amtrak track renewal equipment broke down on Michigan Div, delaying #352 (26) & 353(26) 101 & 75mins (LAKE CITIES).
5-25 Burglars broke into Johnstown PA station during night, took nothing of value
5-27 CITY OF NEW ORLEANS #59(27) delayed by ICG frt derail at Copiahpit MS.
5-27 PALMETTO #89 delayed 131" by engine leak, unit 266 at Hamilton VA.
5-27 NIAGARA RAINBOW #62 hit debris east of Syracuse, damaged Turbo unit 159, delayed 80".
5-29 EMPIRE BUILDERS of 5/28 both delayed by BN frt derail at Harlem MT; psgrs bused betw 2 trains & they turned; delays about 300" each.
5-29 CAPITOL LTD #441 delayed by engine failure, unit 237, 112" Tacoma Park MD.
5-29 Due to May-Fest celebration in Memphis, CITY OF NEW ORLEANS #58(29) operated to station & reversed 5mis to East Jct & detoured on frt main to Woodstock with 55" delay.
5-29 EMPIRE BUILDER #7(28) lost 267" going thru 22 red signals when 3ft of wet snow knocked out signals between Gildford & Shelby MT on the BN.
5-30 SUNSET LTD #2(28) delayed 170" at Hondo TX by disabled frt ahead.
5-30 SF ZEPHYR #5(29) held 165" Haigler NE due to high water at Wray CO on BN.
5-30 Corridor train 186 disabled after hitting debris east of Raritan R. Bridge.
5-31 SCL frt derail at Dunlop VA, no detour route; #81, 89, 90 terminated & psgrs bused around scene, #87 & 88 delayed.
5-31 #5(31)&6(30) delayed by telephoned bomb report, caller imitated policeman.

SPECIAL TRAINS OPERATED IN MAY:

5-2 Fulton County Safety Special #2 Wash-Atlanta
5-2 NRHS Special New Haven-Waterbury-New Haven
5-5 Philadelphia Orchestra Phila-NY-Phila
5-8 Seton Hospital Special AUS-SAS-AUS
5-11 Philadelphia Orchestra Phila-NY-Phila
5-15 NRHS Special Portland-Madras OR
5-15 Pacific RR Society L.A.-Yuma
5-15 Herman Maifest #1 St. Louis-Herman-STL
5-16 Herman Maifest #2
5-16 Lancaster NRHS PHL-HAR-PHL-WAS
5-22 Old Dominion NRHS RVR-MRB-RVR

BOOKS



Interurban Press has published a new volume on the Western Pacific Railroad. "D-Day on the Western Pacific" covers the transition from steam to Diesel locomotives on the railroad, and to do so, covers the 40 years beginning in 1939 when the first Diesel switcher was purchased. This well-documented hardbound volume also includes a lot of material on the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR, and spectacular photos of Feather River Canyon and the other scenery of the railroad. It has a handsome dust jacket painting by Larry Fisher. The author is the well-known Virgil Staff. Price of the book is $29.95 (plus $1.50 if by mail). Publisher is Interurban Press, PO Box 6444, Glendale CA 91205.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"On the other side of this recession, the skies will be overcrowded with airliners again. Americans will be seeking alternative transportation again.

"Is there a future for railroads?

"If you could move a passenger, swiftly and comfortably, 400 miles on 1½ gallons of diesel fuel, mightn't that be the transportation of tomorrow?

"Amtrak has done it between New Haven and Boston.

"While Americans have been watching the highways and skyways, rail travel has been rediscovering itself."

--Columnist Paul Harvey (L.A. Times Syndicate) in San Mateo (CA) Times, Aug 11.

CARS & CONSISTS

*Ferry run of N&W steam loco 611, Birmingham-Atlanta Aug 20: engine N&W 611, tender, water tank; cars 1407 (tool car), 408 (power car), 450, 451 "Hollins College", 533, 494 "General William Mahone", 500 "Claytor Lake", 200 "Lamberts Point". All cars N&W, all in Tuscan red.

*UP special, Old Settler's Association Special (Council Bluffs-Boise), Cheyenne Jun 7: engines 9004, 9003 (GP40X's); cars 302 combine, 1612 "Sun Villa" sleeper, 5473 coach, 5475 coach, 5716 baggage, 4808 diner, 4000 lounge, 6206 buffet lounge, 7006 dome coach, 5472 coach.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Newton KS Aug 7: engines 237, 290; cars 1132, 1222, 39935, 31029, 39947, 39961, 34038, 39963, 33012, 38003, 32003, 32018, ATSF business car 51 "Topeka". Train 2 hours late.

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 1, Tucson Aug 7: engines 703, 301; cars 1156, 39903, 31030, 32014, 38038, 39949, 34098, 39942, 34027, 33015, 32036.

*SILVER METEOR, train 88, Jacksonville Jul 25: engines 377, 380; cars 1253, 1618, 2447 "Sycamore Grove", 2092 "Loch Arkaig", 25021, 25014, 25010, 28003, 8520, 3118, 25057, 25012, 25046, 25001, 2454 "Redwood Grove". Same, train 87,

Aug 1: engines 390, 381; cars 1176, 1627, 2475 "Miami", 2094, 25024, 25029, 25053, 28006, 8519, 3126, 25012, 25044, 25025, 25041, 2440 "Pacific Beach", 7602, 7609 (last two cars off at Jacksonville).

RAIL FANTRIPS

Oct 9: "Foliage Fantasy" Boston-NY RT with private car Lehigh Valley 353 on Amtrak COLONIAL & SHORELINER. $199; limit 20 guests. Champagne brunch and complete dinner aboard. Lehigh Black Diamond, PO Box 353, Syracuse NY 13201.

Oct 10: "Queen of the Valley" NewarkNJ-Allentown PA RT over former Lehigh Valley RR and CNJ main lines behind E-8's. $28. Lv 9am, back 5pm. Tri-State Railway Historical Society, PO Box 2243, Clifton NJ 07015. (201) 857-2987. Visa, M/C ok.

Oct 16 & 17: Charlevoix-Petoskey-Walton Junction-Grand Rapids MI one way. Farlow Tours, 17 W 620 14th St, Oak Brook Terrace IL 60181. (800) 323-1742.

Nov 21: Railroad Extravaganza 10am-4pm; over 100 tables of RR memorabilia. $2 adults, kids & seniors $1. New location: Boy's & Girl's Club of Union, Jeanette Ave, Union NJ. Sponsor: Tri-State Rwy Hist Soc, Clifton NJ. (201) 857-2987.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

VIA RAIL CANADA, AMTRAK, EURAIL PASS, 20th CENTURY RAIL TOURS - tickets and reservations - WE KNOW HOW! One call does it all. Pay by credit card or check. Tickets mailed directly to you. Contact GREAT WESTERN TOURS, masters of rail travel, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

DINING CAR CHINA, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports. Many railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213. Will buy items.

DENVER & RIO Grande and Western Pacific combined 1915 timetable reprint, for the Panama Pacific Exposition, $1. Many interesting branch line and narrow gauge schedules. Over 30 other Colorado employe and passenger reprints. Colorado Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 10, Golden, Colo. 80402. Open year around at 17155 W. 44th Avenue.

CONFUSED BY PHILLY'S RAIL SYSTEMS? Let Delaware Valley Rails make order out of chaos. 192 pages of maps, photos, facts. $11.50 (Pennsylvanians, add 69¢ tax). $12.50 outside U.S. John R. Pawson, Box 411, Willow Grove, PA 19090.

TROLLEY TRAILS BOOKS: Vol.1-Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane, 5-Mont/Utah, 6-W. Canada, 7-N. Calif., 8-S. Calif. $4.00 each. Vol.9-San Diego, Trolley System Maps, more $8.00; Vol.10-Council Bluffs, Iowa, more maps, the future $6. Wilson Bros. Publications, Box 712rtn, Yakima, WA, 98907.

Connecticut Railroad Historical Association programs for fall, 1982, meetings: Sept. 26: William Ensign III, "A New England Rail Passenger Network"; Oct. 31: Richard T. Lane, "York County Trolleys Then; Seashore Trolley Museum Now"; Dec. 5: Kevin Gregoire, "Amtrak for the '80's." All meetings free and open to the public, are held Sundays, 2pm at N. Canaan Town Hall Annex, Pease St., Canaan, CT. Phone 617-448-2224 or 203-927-3782.

LARGE B&W STEAM IN SNOW CHRISTMAS CARD $3.75 dozen delivered. Free sample. Preddy's Cards, Gen. Delivery, POINT ROBERTS WA 98281 (Canada; 4826 12th Av,Delta BC)

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

JUNE 1982 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE/(DEGREASE) OVER 1981

Metroliners	89,496	-11.6
NE Corr Conventional	488,126	-.4
Phila-NH-Springfield	14,799	-33.9
NY-Philadelphia	172,477	-18.3
Phila-Harrisburg	65,575	-8.5
New York-Harrisburg	23,593	-27.0
TOTAL NE CORRIDOR:	854,070	-8.1
NY-Niagara Falls	60,380	-8.4
Chicago-St. Louis	23,257	-9.6
Chicago-Milwaukee	12,511	-47.8
Chic.-Detroit/Toledo	32,139	-18.8
Chicago-Carbondale	11,585	-8.8
Chicago-Quincy	3,145	-2.4
L.A.-San Diego	108,917	-2.2
Seattle-Eugene	4,606	-42.1
Vancouver-Seattle	--	-100.0
Washington-Cincinnati	--	-100.0
Wash.-Martinsburg	21,172	-4.7
Oakland-Bakersfield	16,862	-7.8
New York-Montreal	6,310	-13.8
Chicago-Port Huron	9,011	-9.2
Chicago-Dubuque	--	-100.0
Chicago-Duluth	18,854	88.5
Chicago-Valparaiso	21,724	2.7
Chicago-Indianapolis	4,387	-38.6
Chicago-Peoria	--	-100.0
Chicago-Kansas City	10,635	-7.1
Phila.-Pittsburgh	7,760	-21.6
Portland-Eugene	--	-100.0
L.A.-Sacramento	6,585	.0
TOTAL SHORT DIST.:	381,840	-13.3

Washington-Montreal	10,863	-12.4
New York-Florida	55,004	-16.0
Chicago-NY/Washington	22,793	-21.5
Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	9,008	-51.4
Chicago-Seattle	40,728	-1.0
Chicago-San Francisco	29,764	-21.3
Chicago-Los Angeles	27,195	-29.5
Chicago-New Orleans	16,726	-18.4
Chicago-Texas	9,143	-55.8
L.A.-New Orleans	8,362	-30.7
L.A.-Seattle	46,612	-24.1
Chicago-NY/Boston	30,300	-7.3
Boston-Newport News	6,903	9.6
New York-Savannah	13,602	-2.8
Seattle-Salt Lake/Chic	15,075	-28.3
New York-New Orleans	24,689	-6.5
L.A./Ogden-Chicago	11,929	-27.2
TOTAL LONG DISTANCE:	378,698	-20.2
Special Trains	3,800	-3.0
SYSTEM TOTAL:	1,618,408	-12.4

Here are the June Amtrak ridership figures. The previous month's were published last issue. The recession continued to hurt Amtrak in June, as ridership systemwide was down 12.4% from June 1981. However, the drop was not as great as in either of the two preceding months--April was down 17.8% and May down 14.4%. Those three months, in fact, show a steady improvement in patronage, percentagewise, compared to similar 1981 figures.

In the short distance category, the routes with blanks in the ridership column and -100.0% in the percent change column represent those runs that were discontinued in Oct 1981. In part, the present ridership decline is due to their absence. RTN estimates that if they were still part of the system, short distance patronage would be down only 6.1% instead of 13.3%.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

During this year we have gradually fallen two issues behind our normal publication schedule. In order to bring our cover dates up to the actual publication times, we are dating only one issue as July (last issue) and one as August (this issue). This will not affect the number of issues on your subscription or change our regular twice-monthly publication schedule.

Carl Loucks

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